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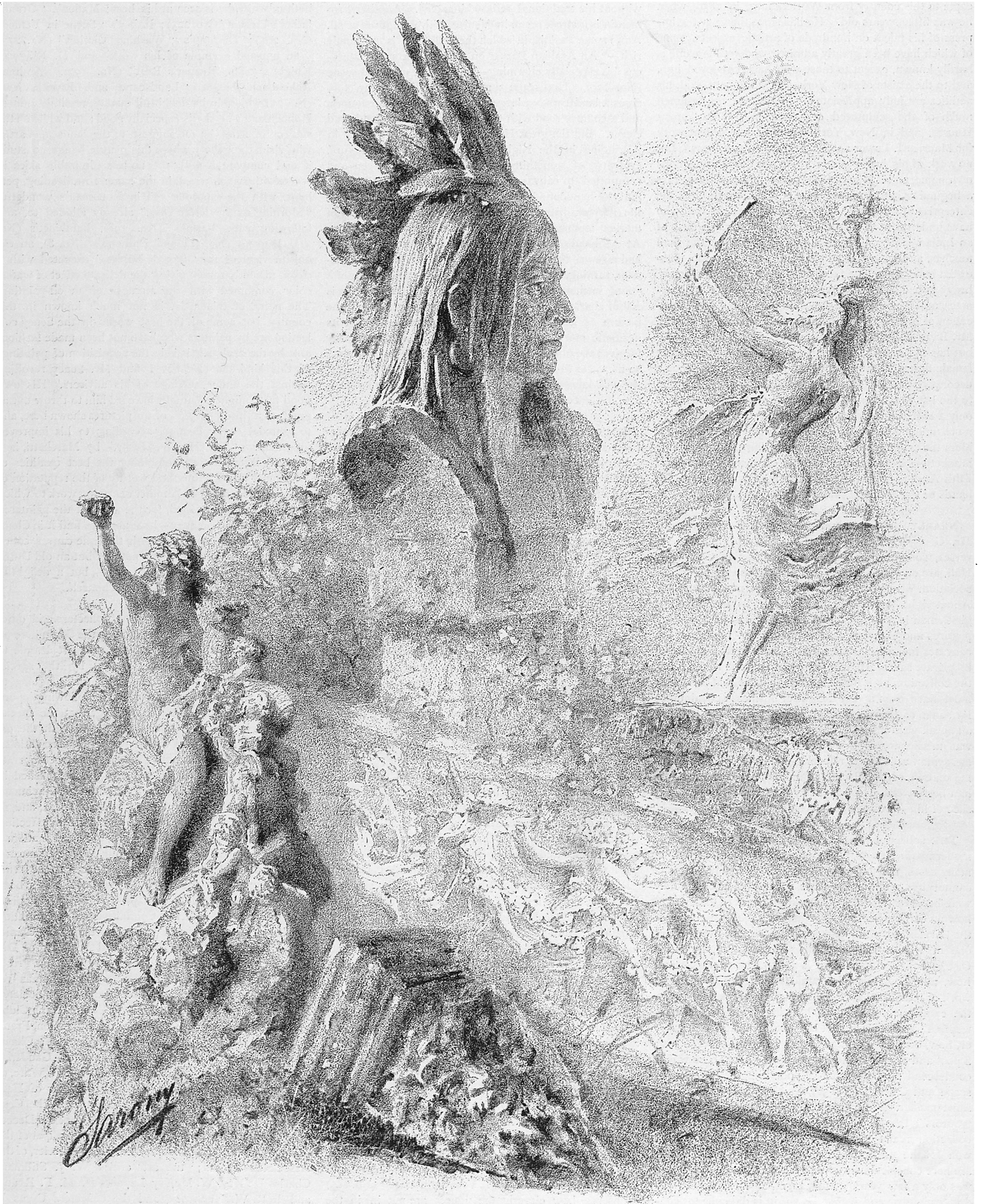
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THE ART AMATEUR MONTHLY JOURNAL
DEVOTED TO THE CULTIVATION OF
ART IN THE HOUSEHOLD

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My Note Book.

Leonato.—Are these things spoken, or do I but dream?

Don John.—Sir, they are spoken, and these things are true.

Much Ado About Nothing.



It is always a pleasure to direct attention to the work of genius, and it is especially so when the person possessing it, on account of his modest and retiring disposition, has been neglected. Theodore Baur, some of whose work is sketched on the front page by his friend Sarony, came to this country from Würtemberg, in 1850, when he was fifteen years old. He has since then put the impress of his talent on hundreds of artistic objects, some of which have been greatly admired, and yet his name is hardly known, except to those who have employed him, and to the artists of New York, by whom, be it said, his abilities are fully appreciated. In Ottawa he designed much of the sculptured ornament in the Parliament Houses, and in New York he has done excellent work for Maurice J. Power and leading decorative firms. But no work of his has been given to the public under his own name, and it is therefore gratifying to announce that a beginning is to be made in that direction, through the enterprise of Messrs. Schneider, Campbell & Co. who have undertaken to cast in bronze the admirable bust of an Indian chief on which he is now putting the final touches, and which forms the centre of the group illustrated herewith. The face, with its high cheek bones, heavy jaw, dilated nostrils and cruel mouth is full of character, and is not without a certain dignity in its personification of brute courage, combined with savage cunning. Mr. Baur modelled the rough study from "Sitting Bull," but has not attempted a portrait of that worthy. The female figure, to the right of the picture, is found upon a decorative panel. The charming Bacchante in the group to the left was recently alluded to in these columns: it is only a sketch and probably will never become anything more unless a commission for the finished work should bless the sculptor. The frieze of dancing children and the bracket were executed, with other excellent work, for a Fifth Avenue house, the decoration of which is in the hands of the architect, Mr. James Ware.

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NEARLY three hundred paintings formerly owned by Mr. George I. Seney, but, by reason of financial reverses, soon to be dispersed at auction in Chickering Hall, are on view at the rooms of the American Art Association, where they deservedly attract much attention. About eight hundred thousand dollars is the price this gentleman is reported to have paid for his acquisition of pictures and experience as a connoisseur. A few of the canvases included in this amount have been disposed of by private sale. Allowing for them a good round price, the collection, as it now stands, indicates that Mr. Seney must have been a very delightful business acquaintance for some of the dealers. It is not surprising that they all speak well of him. "Did you know my brother, who was missionary in this place before I came?" a young clergyman asked of a reformed cannibal chief, on landing on one of the Pacific islands. "Oh, yes, me know him berry well. He was berry nice man—me eat big slice of him," was the enthusiastic reply.

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THE collection contains many of the most valuable modern paintings to be found in this country; but, in many cases, they are in such curious company that one cannot but wonder by what process of selection they were brought together. It would be easy to understand how an earnest admirer of Rousseau should have bought the thirteen examples shown of that master, nearly every one of which—leading with "Morning on the River Oise"—is first-class; but it is not so easy to understand how, admiring Diaz, he could suffer such an alleged work of that artist's brush as the landscape, No. 127 in the catalogue, to hang in the same house with a masterpiece like "The Forest of Fontainebleau" (No. 279); or, how, owning Daubigny's marvellous landscape with a pool and storks in the foreground (No. 241), he would condescend to have such a poor thing as the "Landscape and Cattle" (No. 30), which is attributed to the same master. And how could one who bought some "Corots" that are found bearing that name in this collection really have appreciated the qualities which won for the poetic painter his undying fame and which are here conspicuously absent? Mr. Seney, I am told, was only a few years getting together these three hundred canvases; and if that be so, it is difficult to con-

ceive why, if he wanted an example of Vibert, for instance, he should have bought such an archaic specimen as "Inspecting the Fort," a made-up studio picture of costumed figures, dated 1867, and showing hardly an indication of the qualities which have since won success for that witty artist. The collection abounds in unusual examples of famous modern painters, and in some cases the choice has been very fortunate. "An Oriental Funeral," dated 1870, is an admirable example of Eugene Fromentin: the canvas, by the way, although alive with human figures, reveals the presence of no horse, and a Fromentin without a horse is as rare as a Wouvermans without his traditional milk-white steed. Another Fromentin is a street scene in Venice, with no figures at all. Among the Pasinis, in which the collection is unusually rich—"An Arabian Bazaar on the Outskirts of Damascus" is especially charming—is a purely pastoral scene (No. 120), "Landscape and Cattle." Munkácsy, too, signs a landscape—a large canvas, showing a common and a country road with twilight effect, very bold and clever. But the great Hungarian is seen at his best in "Bringing in the Night Rovers," a powerful picture, evidently of something which he himself had seen and committed to canvas so far as he could recall it. A party of handcuffed brawlers is being marched through the narrow, dirty street at early morning, in view of market women, children and laborers going to work. At the head of the gang is a ruffian who has evidently had a severe tussle with the police; near him is a student, turning, shamefaced, from the horrified gaze of a young woman, probably his sweetheart. Every figure is full of character; every face is full of expression, and the picture, as a whole, is so well composed and tells its dramatic story so simply, so truthfully, that one easily forgives the characteristically sooty coloring which mars so many of Munkácsy's best works. "In the Studio," the well-known canvas showing the artist and his wife, is also in the collection.

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BOUGUEREAU'S "La Vierge aux Anges," commercially speaking, is an important picture, for the possession of which there will be lively competition, but it will hardly convert those who like to see real flesh instead of the pretty waxen composition of this famous artist. Admirable in drawing, composition and sentiment, the work fails to please the critical eye; for one knows that such a child as is shown here could not possibly live, and that he needs all the care of the angels who surround him in the picture. You could run a pin into the infant's leg clear to the bone, and he would never feel it. Surely, Rubens, with all his vulgarity, is worth a thousand such "dudish" painters as Bouguereau, Cabanel and others of the same school. Rubens, at least, could paint living flesh. These gentlemen never do so. Other popular pictures are: Benjamin Vautier's "Bringing Home the Bride;" Defregger's admirable "Arrival at the Ball;" Domingo's "Spanish Café"—perhaps the most important work by this master in the country; Renouf's "A Helping Hand," known to us all by the excellent print of it in the dealers' windows; "The Marriage Settlement," by Henry Mosler; "Romeo and Juliet in Friar Lawrence's Cell," by Carl Becker; "A Prisoner of State," by Eastman Johnson; "The Country Doctor," by E. Harburger, a thoroughly admirable bit of genre, representing a poor sick little fellow, with face bound up in a handkerchief, sitting on his father's knee and leaning forward toward the doctor with the most pitiful expression imaginable; Delort's "Richelieu and Father Joseph;" "The Duet," by Dagnan-Bouveret, a more agreeable picture than the artist's "Un Accident;" "A Difficult Question," by Gauguin; Knaus's "Herd Boy," a happy youngster, lying upon his back and kicking up his heels with healthy exuberance, and "The First Essay," by Jochmus, an excellent work of its class.

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In addition to those already indicated, attention may be directed to several other paintings, which are among the finest in the collection. Note Millet's "Brittany Washerwoman" (No. 280) and "La Blanchisseuse" (No. 177); Hugo Salmson's "Woman Churning" (No. 175), quite in Millet's vein and hardly inferior to his work; the two examples of Diaz, "The Bathers" (No. 186) and "Abandoned by Love" (No. 283); the "Landscape" by Lambinet (No. 21); Rosa Bonheur's "Landscape and Sheep" (No. 257); Van Marcke's "La Vanne" (No. 284); "Sheep," by Jacque (No. 48); Rico's "Mill at Montargis" (No. 61) and "A Venetian Palace" (No. 185)—observe how cleverly the figures are put in in the

latter; Kowalski's "Winter in Russia" (No. 96), with its admirably painted snow and excellent distance; Jules Breton's "Evening in the Hamlet of Finisterre" (No. 282), perhaps the strongest work of this admirable artist; Clays' "Holland Boats" (No. 108); W. T. Richards's strong body color painting, "Rocks at Newport" (No. 117); Rousseau's silvery landscape (No. 187), "Evening" (No. 236), and "Sunset" (No. 139); Jules Dupré's tender "Sunset" (No. 144), with marvellous aerial perspective, and "Approaching Storm" (No. 248), with its luminous, opalesque sky; Schreyer's masterly "Snow-bound" (No. 149) and "Tired Horses" (No. 266), in both of which he is seen at his best; Madou's "Grandfather's Present" (No. 225); Isabey's "Scene in Venice" (No. 265); Decamp's "Washing Clothes" (No. 273)—an unusual example of his work—and D. Ridgway Knight's "The Reaper's Rest" (No. 190). Andreas Achenbach has a "Landscape and River View" (No. 71) which, in its delightful quality, reminds one of Hobbema. The sky is especially good; and while on the subject of skies, let me suggest to the landscape artist who visits the gallery where this picture hangs, to study it and compare it with the no less admirable skies in several other pictures all in the same row, leading, perhaps, with the vaporous veil in Rousseau's wonderful "Morning on the River Oise," already alluded to, and following with Pasini's (No. 198), Lambinet's (No. 21), Dupré's (No. 51), and Dalbono's (No. 8), an exquisite view of the "Bay of Naples," executed with a clean, masterly touch, giving the delicate effect of water-color combined with the strength of an oil-painting. The name of this artist is not much known in this country, but some of the best works in the Seney collection are by painters who have not been made fashionable by the dealers. It is in the acquisition of paintings of this kind that I fancy I find Mr. Seney revolting against the undue tutelage of his advisers. His own good taste might eventually have led him to throw out as much as a third, perhaps, of the pictures shown here, and to remodel the collection according to his improved judgment. "The Hunting Party," by Marchetti, is a masterly little painting, combining the best qualities of Meissonier and Fortuny, and worthy of the reputation of either of these artists. Another charming work to which attention should be called, for the name of the painter is unfamiliar in this country—I cannot even find it in Clement's "Dictionary of Artists"—is the little canvas called "Comfort," by John J. Paling, nothing but an old Dutch peasant blowing on his hot porridge, but a delightful genre not unworthy of Josef Israels himself.

* * *

THE general meeting of "artists, collectors and other friends of art" in New York, called by the Committee on Organization of the proposed national art league to act upon the constitution prepared by the special committee, has not convened up to the time of going to press. It will be seen, however, by the following report, which will be presented to the meeting, that the special committee has found it desirable to begin with the organization of a New York branch of the proposed national league. This being effected, its officers can co-operate with similar branches which may be established in Boston, Philadelphia, Washington, Baltimore, Cincinnati, St. Louis, Chicago, San Francisco, and elsewhere; and, as soon as practicable, the branches can unite in effecting a national organization. The league, to be truly national, can be practically established only by such means. There is a philological objection, to be sure, to the forming of a "branch" before the parent trunk has been born; but the objection, perhaps, is only a philological one. Among those of the Committee on Organization who signed the call for the general meeting are: Daniel Huntington, President of the National Academy of Design and the Century Club; John Taylor Johnston, President of the Metropolitan Museum of Art; Thomas W. Wood, President of the American Water-Color Society; Henry Farrer, president of the New York Etching Club; the painters, R. Swain Gifford, Eastman Johnson, Frank D. Millet, F. Hopkinson Smith, William M. Chase, J. Alden Weir; the sculptor Augustus St. Gaudens; the architect Stanford White; Professor W. R. Ware, of Columbia College; George Wm. Curtis, editor of Harper's Weekly; A. W. Drake, art director of The Century; Mrs. William T. Blodgett, President of the Decorative Art Society; Mrs. Susan B. Carter, principal of the Cooper Institute Art Schools; Mrs. T. M. Wheeler, of the Associated Artists; the art critics W. J. Stillman, Charles De Kay, W. McKay Laffan, W. M. F. Round and J. R. W. Hitchcock, and the collectors Cyrus J.

Lawrence, Thomas B. Clarke, James F. Sutton, Charles B. Curtis and Brayton Ives. I divide these names into classes, as a suggestion to leaders in art matters in other cities than New York, who are considering the question of organizing branches of the national league.

* * *

THE following is the proposed constitution, as already approved by the Committee on the Organization of a national art league:

Article I.—This organization shall be known as "The New York Branch of the National Society of Arts." It shall be composed of artists, collectors, and other friends of Art.

Article II.—Its object shall be to protect and promote the interests of Art in the United States, in connection with similar organizations which may be hereafter established in other cities of the Union, to form collectively the National Society of Arts.

Article III.—To achieve this end, it will seek to check fraud and deceit in the traffic in works of art; to oppose, by every legitimate means, bad art in public places; to advance sound art education; to encourage public art exhibitions, both temporary and permanent; to secure legislation in behalf of the true interests of American art and artists; and to establish friendly relations between artists and collectors at home and abroad.

Article IV.—The management of this organization shall be vested in a Board of Twenty Trustees, seven of whom shall be American resident artists. The Trustees shall select from their number a President. There shall also be five Vice-Presidents, a Secretary and a Treasurer; but these officers shall not necessarily be selected from the Board of Trustees.

Article V.—The Board of Trustees at their first meeting, shall divide themselves by lot into four equal classes, to serve for terms of one, two, three and four years respectively. At each annual meeting of the organization thereafter there shall be chosen by ballot five Trustees to serve four years.

Article VI.—The Trustees shall annually choose by ballot from their own number a President, who shall also be President of the organization. They shall annually appoint a Secretary and a Treasurer, and shall annually select by ballot from their own number five persons, who, with the President, shall constitute an Executive Committee, who shall be clothed with such powers as the Board of Trustees may prescribe.

Article VII.—The members of the organization shall consist of two classes: (1) Members, who shall pay Five Dollars annually, and (2) Life Members, who shall pay Fifty Dollars in one sum. Both Members and Life Members shall be admitted only after approval by the Executive Committee.

Article VIII.—The Board of Trustees shall hold regular meetings on the first Tuesday in each month (except June, July, August and September). Eleven members shall constitute a quorum competent to transact any business before the Board.

Article IX.—The Board of Trustees shall have power to enact such by-laws for the government of this organization as may be required, not inconsistent with the provisions of the Constitution. It may also fill vacancies in its number, caused by death, resignation, or otherwise.

Article X.—The annual meeting of the organization shall be held on the first Tuesday in April, 1886, and each year thereafter, for the election of five Trustees, and for the transaction of such other business as may be brought before it. At the annual or a special meeting, thirty members shall constitute a quorum.

Article XI.—Special meetings of the organization may be called by the President, with the approval of three members of the Executive Committee, and shall be called whenever the President shall be thereto requested in writing by twenty members of the organization. But at such special meeting no business other than that specified in the call shall be considered, except by unanimous consent. Notice of such meeting shall be sent by mail to each member, at least ten days before such meeting.

Article XII.—The full power of the organization shall be vested in the Board of Trustees, which shall be subject only to the authority of the annual meeting.

Article XIII.—These articles may be amended and the qualifications of members changed at any annual meeting of the organization, by a vote of two-thirds of the members present, provided that a printed notice of the general object of the proposed amendments shall have been mailed at least ten days before the meeting to every member of the organization.

Committee on Constitution: CYRUS J. LAWRENCE, HENRY FARRER, MONTAGUE MARKS, R. SWAIN GIFFORD, CHARLES B. CURTIS.

* * *

A MUCH esteemed correspondent in Washington writes as follows:

In your February number you take the proposition to buy the paintings by Mrs. Fassett and Miss (not Mrs. as you print) Ransom as the text for a few disparaging remarks about the fitness of Congress to make such purchases. Your language is rather strong; for instance, when you speak of "reckless jobbery." Now, I don't believe there is a particle of the taint of "jobbery" in the proposal!

The pictures, if they have any claim to be bought by the Government for the halls of Congress, would possess it by reason of their value as records of *historical* events or personages; for Congress is not engaged in making an art gallery. Now, the picture of Thomas is a double portrait of the battle-field, the surrounding landscape of Chickamauga and of the general whose ability gained that field. It commemorates one of the most important occurrences of the war and one of the noblest men and best military leaders America has yet produced. The artist—who was formerly a pupil of Huntington, Durand and Hicks, and who afterward passed a long time in study and work in Europe, and whose studies of some of the

masterpieces in the Dresden Gallery are simply charming—spent weeks in studying the battle-field of Chickamauga. The fidelity with which she has represented both the surroundings and the man are witnessed to by hundreds of his old comrades. The painting is a faithful, conscientious work—it is thoroughly painted. As I never saw Thomas I cannot say as to the likeness, save that it impresses you as a good likeness, and I must believe from the testimony I have seen, it is an excellent portrayal of the man. Congress will do a good and not a bad act by purchasing it, in my judgment. The protest of the Penn. Academy was an *imperfection* because, without having seen the painting, they denounce it. I will say nothing about the injustice to the artist, and the insolence to the library committee, involved in this protest. If this is the kind of justice earnest artists are to receive at the hands of our American Art Academies, Heaven help them!

As to the very large and very interesting (by reason of its portraits) painting of Mrs. Fassett's, that has a claim in that it presents the "vera effigies" of the notable men and women of that day—many of whom have already "gone over to the majority"—Chas. O'Connor, Benj. Hill, President Garfield, being the first names that occur to me. It records, too, an important event, but one which I fancy the Democrats will not care to perpetuate the memory of. As a work of art, why, very few paintings including crowded portraits can have much of artistic merit; they are mostly valued as mementoes, and I should base the claim of this painting on that characteristic, which it certainly possesses. If these two pictures are worth buying at all, the price does not seem exorbitant, judging from prices paid for similar works.

* * *

DOES it not occur to my correspondent that \$10,000 is rather high for a mere pictorial "record of an historical event"? Perhaps, as he says, "Congress is not engaged in making an art gallery;" then why should it be asked to pay the price of a great work of art for what, in the judgment of competent persons, is not as valuable as a good photograph would be? I am glad to learn that there was no "jobbery" in the attempt to induce the Government to make this purchase, and that there was no "jobbery" in the attempt to induce the Government to buy Mrs. Fassett's chef d'œuvre, "The Electoral Commission," for \$15,000. But it is certain that neither Miss Ransom nor Mrs. Fassett ever sold or could ever sell one of the pictures to private purchasers for even a fifth of the price asked of Congress; and it seems to me very proper that the attempt to enrich these two ladies at the expense of the public treasury has been defeated. MONTEZUMA.

ADVICE BY PRIVATE CORRESPONDENCE.

THE reply to "E. E. D." on another page will serve for many readers of The Art Amateur who desire the same information. This lady asks if we are willing to answer inquiries in regard to artistic furnishing of houses and single rooms by *private correspondence*, and if so, what are our "terms." In our next issue fuller particulars will be given. In the meanwhile, to avoid possible misapprehension, we would say that our correspondence columns are always open to the reader free of charge. It is only when private information is called for, involving expense and extra trouble, that a fee is required, and the charge of five or ten dollars for a set of samples giving a complete color scheme for the paint, paper, furniture and draperies of a room will not be found unreasonable.

Dramatic Penitence.

Hamlet.—Good, my lord, will you see the players well bestowed?
Polonius.—My lord, I will use them according to their desert.

THE theatrical season, which will end very early this year, will long be remembered as one of the most brilliant in the history of the American stage. We have had in this country, at one time, the greatest actor of England, the greatest actor of Germany, the greatest actor of America and the greatest actress of Italy—Irving, Sonnenthal, Booth and Ristori. That would be glory enough for one season; but these splendid stars have been surrounded by bright constellations.

Irving will conclude his farewell engagement at the Star Theatre on April 4th, and sail for England on the following Tuesday, never, he says, to return to the United States professionally. But an actor's "Never!" is usually like that of the *Captain* of the "Pinafore." At any rate, Mr. Irving has already promised to come back on a social visit within a couple of years; and, being here, he is almost sure to act, if only for charity.

The only novelty of the farewell season at the Star is "Eugene Aram," a gloomy and peculiar play, made interesting by Irving's wonderful acting and brightened just a little by Ellen Terry's grace and beauty.

Everybody knows the story of "Eugene Aram." The

moody, melancholy and desperate despair of a man with a murder on his mind suit Irving perfectly, and it is instructive to observe the art with which he discriminates between *Aram's* characteristics and those of *Matthias*, in "The Bells," who also suffers from the constant consciousness of a crime. Beyond this study of character and the charming love-making of Miss Terry, the play has no dramatic value.

It was hoped—it was almost expected—that Irving would celebrate his last week here by bringing out "As You Like It," with scenery by American artists, costumes by American workpeople and properties by American makers, and would transfer the play to his London theatre for the opening of his season. The revival of "As You Like It" at the St. James's, London, by Mr. and Mrs. Kendall, has interfered with this project, which would have been a liberal education for our managers and their employes. But I have strongly advised Mr. Irving to put "As You Like It" upon the Lyceum stage as soon as possible, without any reference to the St. James's revival. This is good advice, I think, from a business point of view; for every playgoer who has seen the Kendalls in the comedy would be anxious to compare their presentation with that at the Lyceum, while, from an artistic point of view, I need only mention that Ellen Terry is a born *Rosalind* and Mrs. Kendall, to phrase it mildly, is not.

The farewell programmes are made up of pieces which have been seen during Irving's three previous engagements; but, as he presents them, can they be seen too often? What a wide range of parts he impersonates, from *Dubosc* to *Hamlet*, from *Malvolio* to *Shylock*! What an impressive combination of all the arts and artifices of acting, painting, music and stage-management render every performance memorable! How perfect are the details of every scene! How admirable is the discipline of the carefully-trained company! And how, like golden sunshine, the charm of Ellen Terry irradiates every play in which she appears!

Before Mr. Irving's departure he will be the guest of our most prominent citizens at a public banquet. Ex-President Arthur, or, in his absence, Senator Evarts, will preside. Then some of the most eloquent speakers in the land will tell us what his two visits have done for the public and for the profession.

Such an actor, such a manager, such a teacher, such a reformer ought not to be allowed to leave this country forever. If it be necessary to build a theatre for him in order to induce him to reconsider his resolution, the theatre must be built. No doubt the funds could be subscribed at the Delmonico banquet. Perhaps they will be. I have seen greater miracles.

* * *

SONNENTHAL had only five weeks' leave of absence from the Imperial Theatre, at Vienna, of which he is the manager, and, consequently, his performances here were limited to a fortnight. He was most hospitably received; he had receptions at the Thalia Theatre, the Liederkrantz and the Lotos Club, and our leading actors sent him congratulatory letters and telegrams.

In person, off the stage, Sonnenthal appears as tall and stout as Salvini. He has a large, round, beardless face—an actor's face—and large, brown, sympathetic eyes. His voice is musical; his manner courtly. No one can realize, while looking at him, that he began life as a journeyman tailor—which is next to nothing: the ninth part of a man; especially in Germany—and that he was once so poor that he made with his own hands the costumes which he wore upon the stage. Now he is a gentleman of fortune, education and position, and he receives \$900 a night for his services as a star.

Making his debut in "Uriel Acosta," a play as gloomy as "Eugene Aram," and much more preachy, Herr Sonnenthal's abilities as an actor could hardly be judged from his first night's performance. Like *Eugene Aram*, the hero of the play is a teacher, and a sweet and lovely maiden falls in love with him; but here the resemblance between the two plays ends—except that both are melancholy and undramatic.

Sonnenthal has a fine stage-presence; he delivers the long monologues of *Uriel* with elocutionary skill; he uses his great brown eyes effectively; he knows how to listen; in short, he is evidently an accomplished and experienced actor. But, as *Uriel*, he had only one electrical moment, when, with a heart-moving cry, he flung himself at his mother's feet. Then he roused the immense audience to enthusiasm.

The part by which Herr Sonnenthal will be judged by American critics is *Hamlet*. In this we can stand him